



April 20, 2011

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Wayne Smith  
Freeborn County Environmental Services  
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City of Worthington  
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**Re: Local Review of Worthington Public Utilities 115 kV Transmission Line Project  
Commission Docket Number: E332/LR-11-308**

Dear Mr. Hain, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Chapulis,

Greetings. This letter confirms that the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) has received notification that Worthington Public Utilities (WPU) intends to seek local review to construct a new 2.7-mile long 115 kilovolt (kV) transmission line and to rebuild an existing one-mile long 69 kV line to 115 kV standards. The transmission lines would be located in Nobles County and in the city of Worthington, Minn.

Under the Power Plant Siting Act, a permit from the Commission is required for transmission line projects over 100 kV (Minn. Stat. § 216E). However, local review and permitting is possible for eligible projects (Minn. Stat. § 216E.05). For such projects, a utility may apply to a local unit of government instead of the Commission for a permit to build the project. This letter confirms that WPU's proposed project is eligible for local review.

Based on the proposed location of the project, Nobles County and the city of Worthington are the local units of government with jurisdiction to permit the project. WPU has indicated that it will be seeking a conditional use permit from Nobles County for that portion of the project in the county. A local unit of government may relinquish its permitting jurisdiction by requesting that the Commission assume jurisdiction within 60 days of the filing of an application with the local unit of government (Minn. Rules 7850.5300, Subp. 4).

An environmental review process, including the development of an environmental assessment (EA), must be conducted by a local unit of government with jurisdiction over the project (Minn. Rules

7850.5300). WPU has indicated that Nobles County and the city of Worthington are in agreement that Nobles County will be responsible for the environmental review process for WPU's proposed project.

Specific requirements with regard to the environmental review process include (Minn. Rules 7850.5300, Subp. 5):

- (1) Providing an opportunity for the public to participate in the development of the scope of the environmental assessment before it is prepared,
- (2) Publishing notice in the EQB Monitor when the assessment is available for review and the procedure for commenting on the assessment, and
- (3) Withholding a final decision on the project until at least ten days after the notice appears in the EQB Monitor.

Nobles County must also provide a copy of the environmental assessment to the Commission when it is completed (Minn. Rules 7850.5300, Subp. 5). Electronic filing (eFiling) of the environmental assessment is encouraged (<https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling>).

This letter confirms that WPU has sent the required notice to those persons on the Commission's general notification list that a permit has been applied for from a local unit of government (Minn. Rules 7850.5300, Subp. 3).

Please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



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